

Just to DCT

Executive Registry
76-1944

Page 6

QUESTION: Mr. President, in the primaries to date almost half the voters of your own party have voted against you. Why do you think this is so?

*Rec'd
19 Apr 76*

THE PRESIDENT: I have a formidable opponent, but when you come right down to it, we are doing very well in the delegates and the delegates, that is where the ball game is won or lost, and as of now I think we have 250 some firm delegates and my opponent has, as I recollect, around 80.

We think we have a good many more delegates, and as long as you get the delegates, then the difference in the actual votes is not really significant. But, I can only say again I think my opponent is a formidable public figure, but we are winning, and we are going to keep on winning.

QUESTION: On a different note, Mr. President, the CIA has been and still is a mysterious organization and Howard Hughes was a mysterious human being. Can you tell us anything about the link between Howard Hughes and the CIA?

THE PRESIDENT: The only link that I think I can comment on is the one that involved the GLOMAR, where one of his companies was involved in the construction of that ship and its operation. Other than that, I don't think it is appropriate for me to discuss a relationship that may or may not have existed.

QUESTION: Mr. President, yesterday the Senate Budget Committee approved a budget which added some \$16 billion to your spending totals and provided for smaller tax cut than you wanted. Do you consider this a major change and what effect do you think it would have on the economic outlook?

THE PRESIDENT: We think the budget that we put together with a spending ceiling of \$394 plus billion, calling for additional \$10 billion tax reduction beginning July 1 is the right approach. Now, the House and Senate Budget Committees have added roughly 16 -- well, they went up to \$412 billion in one and \$413 billion in another. I don't think that extra spending is needed.

I think the better way to continue our economic recovery is to hold the lid on spending at the figure that I recommended and to give the American people additional tax reduction. We, of course, have no direct impact in the Executive Branch on their resolution as to the spending ceiling.

MORE

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE *White House*)

Page 5

I have tried to strengthen our relations with a number of those countries. I visited Poland. I have visited Rumania, I have visited Yugoslavia. We believe that it is highly desirable that we should have normal relations with them and they should have normal relations with other countries, and under no circumstances be dominated by any other power.

QUESTION: Was there any change in policy or attitude implied in the Sonnenfeldt memo?

THE PRESIDENT: It has aroused a lot of discussion.

QUESTION: It certainly has aroused a lot of discussion. How do you read it?

THE PRESIDENT: I read it because I was curious as to what it said and when you read it in its entirety the quoted phrases or sentences are, in effect, taken out of context because if you read the total four- or five-page memo, as I recollect, you get a totally different picture than you do when you just read those several sentences.

So, as I see it, number one, I know what our policy is regardless of what the memo says and, number two, I don't think the sentences that were extracted under any circumstances express the foreign policy of this country in relationship to those countries in Eastern Europe.

QUESTION: Thank you. One more. There have been several mentions of the Vice Presidency. Do you plan to do what has long been talked about; that is, to reform the process of the selection of the Vice President when a delegate votes at the convention he is voting for two people, but he only knows the name of one? Do you plan to either tell the convention in advance who your selection would be or to have an open convention in the Vice Presidency?

THE PRESIDENT: I would hope we could be in a position in Kansas City so there would be an opportunity for the delegates further in advance to know an individual that I would prefer or several individuals that I would prefer. I think it is too late to drastically change the procedure and the process at the present time.

On the other hand, if we can get the name or names out before the delegates more quickly, I think it might lead to a better decision or a better feeling by the delegates toward the Presidential nominee and toward the Vice Presidential nominee.

MORE

APR 19 6 42 AM '76

ER